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## LESSON LEARNED

### Children and Disasters: Using Maps to Teach Children About Regional Risks

#### SUMMARY

The New Zealand Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management developed a map that depicts disasters that have occurred to help students familiarize themselves with risks within their region. This can help ensure that students and their families are prepared for disasters that may occur in their region.

#### DESCRIPTION

The New Zealand Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management developed *What's the Plan Stan?* in 2006 to assist teachers in educating schoolchildren between the ages of 7 and 12 about disaster preparedness. The program's Web site contains resources that students and their families can utilize to assist in their household's disaster preparedness efforts.

The *What's the Plan Stan?* Web site provides an interactive map of New Zealand's disasters. The disasters range from hundreds of thousands of years ago to present time. The map is designed to familiarize students with the disasters that can occur in their region. It also helps children learn about earthquakes, floods, man-made disasters, storms, tsunamis, and volcanoes that have occurred in New Zealand.

Children can navigate to the specific disaster pages from the *What's the Plan Stan?* homepage. Each disaster page contains a link to a map of disasters. After clicking on the map link, children can view the map of New Zealand, which is divided into the country's 16 political regions. Children can select any region of the map to learn more information about disasters that occurred in that region. Each region displays all of the disasters that have occurred within that region as well as detailed information about each disaster. For example, the Waikato region has information about a volcano that erupted 26,500 years ago, an earthquake that occurred in 1891, and widespread flooding that occurred in 2007. Students can learn that the volcano eruption 26,500 years ago is considered one of the largest eruptions in modern history. They can also learn that the earthquake of 1891 registered at a magnitude 6.0 on the Richter scale and caused schoolchildren to fall off their chairs. In

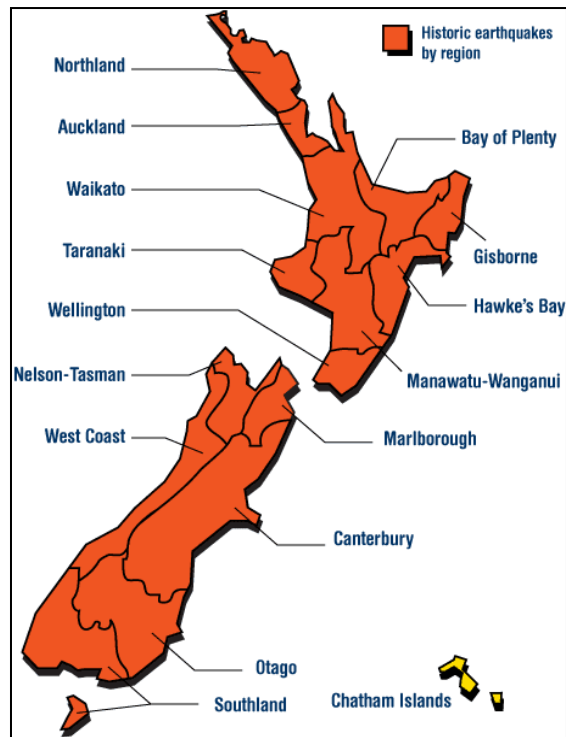
New Zealand has a population of 4,252,277 and a total land area of 267,710 square kilometers. New Zealand's landscape is primarily mountainous with large coastal areas.

The New Zealand Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management launched *What's the Plan Stan?* in 2006. For more information, refer to *Lessons Learned Information Sharing Lesson Learned, School Emergency Planning: Developing Disaster Preparedness Resources for Schools*.



**What's the Plan Stan? Logo**

addition, children can read that torrential rain and gale force winds caused the 2007 flooding. These maps help students to learn about and prepare for disasters that can occur in their region.



***What's the Plan Stan? Earthquake Map***

#### **CITATION**

New Zealand Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management, *What's the Plan Stan?*.  
<http://www.whatstheplanstan.govt.nz/>

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